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NND 969043

By

75 NARA Date 9/11/01



Department of State

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ACTION INR-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-14 RSC-01

PRS-01 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 RSR-01 SAJ-01 /082 W
023683

R 240826Z FEB 73
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8071
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

ISLAMABAD 1608

REF: STATE 032342

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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN/SOVIET RELATIONS; COMMENTS ON INR
ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET ACTIVITIES DIRECTED AGAINST
IRAN AND PAKISTAN

1. EMBASSY GENERALLY AGREES WITH CONCLUSIONS
DRAWN IN INR PAPER: BHUTTO'S CURRENT STRATEGY RE-
GARDING SOVIET "THREAT" DIRECTED TOWARDS OBTAINING
MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM THE US AND TOWARDS DISCREDITING
HIS DOMESTIC POLITICAL OPPOSITION. HOWEVER, EMBASSY
DIFFERS WITH SOME INR JUDGEMENTS LEADING TO ABOVE
CONCLUSIONS. OUR COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC STATEMENTS IN
PAPER FOLLOW:

2. RE IRAQI ARMS AFFAIR, AS REPORTED IN SEVERAL OF OUR
MESSAGES DURING PAST WEEK, SENIOR GOP
OFFICIALS IN VARIOUS MINISTRIES (DEFENSE, INTELLIGENCE
BUREAU, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS) ARE UNABLE AS YET TO
EXPLAIN SATISFACTORILY SEVERAL KEY ASPECTS OF CASE:
DESTINATION OF ARMS; PURPOSE BEHIND ARMS DELIVERIES,
THIRD-COUNTRY INVOLVEMENT. UNTIL MORE FACTS ARE

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E.O. 12958, as amended

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ASCERTAINED, EMBASSY IS NOT PREPARED TO DISMISS POSSIBILITY THAT SOVIETS WERE NOT ONLY AWARE OF IRAQI ARMS SMOGLING BUT THAT SOVIETS MAY IN FACT HAVE BEEN ACTING IN COMPLICITY WITH IRAQIS.

3. WE DO AGREE THAT BHUTTO HAS SEIZED OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED BY ARMS DISCOVERY TO DISCREDIT HIS POLITICAL OPPOSITION. HOWEVER, GOP HAS TROD SOFTLY IN PUBLICLY LINKING SOVIETS WITH POLITICAL OPPOSITION ON ARMS AFFAIR. FOR EXAMPLE, BHUTTO'S REMARKED AS RECENTLY AS FEB 22 THAT RELATIONS WITH USSR "WILL FURTHER IMPROVE". RATHER, GOP HAS INVOKED PAST INDISCRETIONS OF NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY AND JAMAAT-I-ISLAMI LEADERS IN TRANSPARENT EFFORT TO PIN SECESSIONIST LABEL ON FORMER AND ANTI-PAKISTAN LABEL ON LATTER.

4. EMBASSY ALSO CANNOT SUBSCRIBE TO THESIS THAT BHUTTO HAS PLACED ALL BLAME ON SOVIETS FOR 1971 DEBACLE, THUS EXONERATING YAHYA REGIME. YAHYA CLIQUE HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY AND BITTERLY DENOUNCED BY BHUTTO FOR GROSS MISMANAGEMENT OF NATION'S AFFAIRS, INCLUDING RELATIONS WITH EAST PAKISTAN AND CONDUCT OF DECEMBER WAR. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY EMPHASIZED DURING EARLY MONTHS OF BHUTTO GOVERNMENT, AS BHUTTO RETIRED OR EXILED MOST SENIOR SERVICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATED WITH "POLITICAL" GENERALS. IN RECENT MONTHS, CONSPIRACY THEORY HAS GAINED GROUND. REVERSION TO CONSPIRACY APPROACH IS PROBABLY, IN PART, DUE TO PAK PERCEPTION OF EVENTS IN 1971 AND ADDITIONALLY REFLECTS REPROACHES TO BHUTTO FROM PAK MILITARY RESENTFUL OF CONTINUED ADVERSE PUBLICITY.

5. WHETHER THE SHAH HAS SIMPLY BOUGHT BHUTTO'S VIEW OF SOVIET INTENTIONS IN SOUTH ASIA IS UNCERTAIN IN OUR VIEW. WE THINK THE REVERSE IS MORE LIKELY.

6. SOVIET MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH PAKISTAN WAS FLEETING (1968-69) AND HAS BECOME MATTER OF ANCIENT HISTORY TO PAKS FOLLOWING EVENTS OF PAST TWO YEARS. WITHOUT REVIEWING HISTORY OF THIS EPISODE IN SOVIET-PAK RELATIONS, WE SUSPECT THAT CESSATION OF ARMS RELATIONSHIP SOMEWHAT MORE COMPLEX THAN THAT OFFERED IN PARA 7, REFTEL.

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7. FURTHER COMMENTS THIS SUBJECT CONTAINED ISLAMABAD 1603 ON
"PAKISTANI PERCEPTION OF SOVIET INTENTIONS". GDS
SOBER

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